

DECISION MEMO

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

OUACHITA NATIONAL FOREST

MENA-ODEN RANGER DISTRICT

2021 SILVICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Mena Oden Ranger District proposes manual precommercial thinning (PCT) using chainsaws on approximately 426 acres in Scott, Yell, and Montgomery Counties, in Arkansas. The following table lists the areas proposed for treatment.

Area	Compartment	Stand	Legal Description	Treatment	Acres ¹
1	1015	5	T1N R26W Sec 5; T2N R26W Sec 32	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	35
2	1015	21	T2N R26W Sec 32&33	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	36
3	1017	11	T1N R25W Sec 30&31; T1N R26W Sec 25	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	34
4	1064	24	T1N R24W Sec 19; T1N R25W Sec 24	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	37
5	1067	57	T1N R24W Sec 3&10	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	28
6	1071	23	T1N R24W Sec 21	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	40
7	1096	6	T1N R26W Sec 25&25	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	37
8	1107	29	T1S R26W Sec 12	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	38
9	1107	30	T1S R26W Sec 12&13	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	39
10	1107	31	T1S R26W Sec 13	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	39
11	1108	25	T2S R25W Sec 30	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	29
12	1108	26	T2S R25W Sec 30	Manual PCT w/chainsaws	34
TOTAL					426

¹ Note: Acres were derived from GIS data, and product accuracy may vary. They may be developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based upon modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those, for which they were created, may yield inaccurate or misleading results. We released this information in February 2021. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace GIS products without notification.

The purpose and primary goal of (PCT) is to reduce competition for nutrients and manage quality pine stands for future commercial harvest. PCT will be accomplished using chainsaws to cut and fell competing stems. Wildlife den trees and some existing large hardwood trees would be retained to complement the hardwood component. Other hardwood stems from desired species would be selected and retained from the developing regeneration.

None of these treatments involve herbicide application, road construction, or any other ground

disturbing activities. Streamside management zones and drainages will not be treated.

DECISION

I have decided to approve the above detailed activities. These actions fall into a category of actions (timber stand and or wildlife habitat improvement activities which do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than one mile of low standard road construction, Category 6; Section 31.2 in FSH 1909.15) which the Chief of the Forest Service has determined will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

I find that there are no extraordinary circumstances that would warrant further analysis and documentation in an EA or EIS. I took into account resource conditions identified in agency procedures that should be considered in determining whether extraordinary circumstances might exist:

- Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species –. Forest Service sensitive species: Beneficial impact to the Monarch butterfly and Frosted Elfin. May impact, but not likely to cause a trend to federal listing or loss of viability: Fourche Mountain Salamander, Ozark chinquapin, and Iron’s Fork burrowing crayfish. (Biological Evaluation, project file). The project “may affect, likely to adversely affect” the Northern Long-eared bat; however, there are no effects beyond those previously disclosed in the programmatic biological opinion dated January 25, 2018. (Project specific Fish and Wildlife Service letter signed December 31, 2019)
- Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds – there are no floodplains or jurisdictional wetlands within the project area and none will be impacted by project activities; there are no municipal watersheds in the project area
- Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas – none are present within the project area; none will be affected.
- Inventoried roadless areas or potential wilderness areas – none are present within the project area; none will be affected.
- Research natural areas – none are present within the project area; none will be affected.
- American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites – There would be no extraordinary circumstances related to these resources because the proposed activities do not have the potential to impact potential historic properties within the project area.
- Archaeological sites or historic properties or areas – The actions will avoid any sites listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and will not cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historic resources. This is based on site specific cultural resource surveys conducted on the analysis area in preparation of a NHPA Compliance Memorandum signed February 1, 2021.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This action was originally listed as a proposal on the Ouachita National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions and updated periodically during the analysis. A project announcement letter was mailed to interested parties on October 19, 2020.

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

This decision is consistent with the Ouachita National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan as required by the National Forest Management Act.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW (OBJECTION) OPPORTUNITIES

Decisions that are categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are not subject to an administrative review process (pre-decisional objection process) (Agriculture Act of 2014, Subtitle A, Sec. 8006).

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The project may be implemented immediately.

CONTACT

For additional information concerning this decision, contact: Chris Morgan, District Silviculturist, Mena-Oden Ranger District, 1603 Hwy 71North, Mena AR, 71953, 479-394-2382.

/s/ Tim Oosterhous

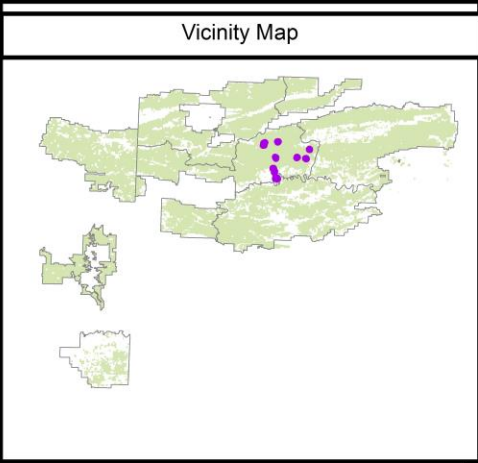
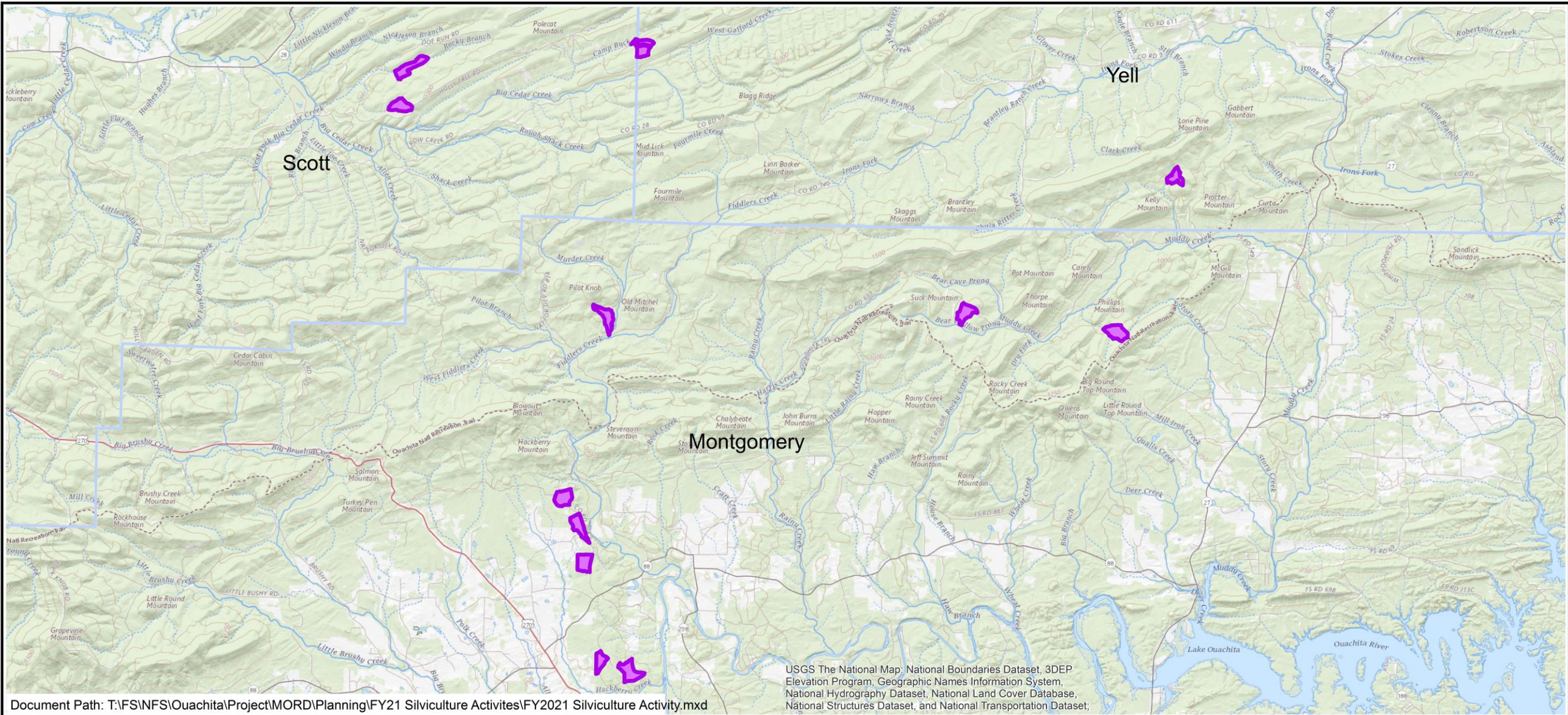
2/1/21

TIM OOSTERHOUS
District Ranger

Date

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The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, and incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. This information was released on the date shown below. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace GIS products without notification. Designation of a road, trail or area for motor vehicle use by a particular class of vehicle under 36 CFR 212.51 is not represented on this map. It is the responsibility of the user to acquire the current Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM). The MVUM identifies those roads and trails designated for the motor vehicle use under 36 CFR 212.51 for the purpose of enforcing the prohibition at 36 CFR 261.13.



Legend

PCT

Sheet 1 of 1

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FY2021 Release and PCT
Project Location Map
Mena-Oden Ranger District Montgomery, Scott and Yell County, Arkansas
U.S. Forest Service - R8 Ouachita National Forest
For more information, contact the Mena Ranger District at 1603 Hwy. 71 North, Mena, AR or phone (479) 394-2382